

Attorney Docket # 3415-11CIP

Serial No. **09/688,482**
Amdt. dated February 3, 2004
Reply to Office Action dated October 3, 2003

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A method of securely delivering to a delivery destination a tote for holding an item, the method comprising the steps of:

placing the item in a tote, wherein said tote comprises a cover, a main structure, and a pair of eyelets on an exterior of the tote, including a first of the pair of eyelets on exterior of the cover and a second of the pair of eyelets on the exterior of the main structure substantially in proximity to the first eyelet;

delivering the tote to a delivery destination; and

securing the tote substantially at the delivery destination by looping a portion of a securing means through the pair of eyelets to securely tighten the cover to the main structure of the tote, wherein the securing means is securely connected to a mounting means substantially at the delivery destination.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the ~~the~~ securing means is securely connected to a storage container mounted in proximity to the delivery destination, and wherein the method further comprises the step of:

holding the securing means inside the storage container when the securing means is not in use.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the mounting means comprises a first and second mounting means, wherein the securing means comprises a plurality of sections, a first end of a first section of the plurality of sections being securely connected to the first ~~the~~ mounting means, and a first end of a third section of the plural sections being securely connected to the second mounting means, and wherein the step of securing the tote substantially at the delivery destination comprises the steps of:

Attorney Docket # 3415-11CIP

Serial No. **09/688,482**
Amdt. dated February 3, 2004
Reply to Office Action dated October 3, 2003

looping a first end of a second section of the plurality of sections through and around the first and second eyelets to securely tighten the cover to the main structure of the tote;
~~[connecting a third section of the plurality of sections to one of the first mounting means and a second mounting means proximate the first mounting means;]~~
locking a second end of the third section to a second end of the second section with a first lock that may be opened by a customer; and
after looping the first end of the second section around the first and second eyelets, locking the first end of the second section to a second end of the first section with a second lock that may be opened by a delivery person.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of:
retrieving, by the customer, the tote by unlocking the first lock and removing the looped section of the securing means from the first and second eyelets.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the tote further comprises a second pair of eyelets on a second side of the tote, including a third eyelet on the exterior of the cover and a fourth eyelet on the exterior of the main structure substantially in proximity to the third eyelet[;], and wherein the step of securing the tote substantially at the delivery destination comprises the step of:

looping a second securing means through the third and fourth eyelets to securely tighten the cover to the main structure of the tote on the second side.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the tote further comprises a hinge on a second side of the tote to connect the cover to the main structure of the tote.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the item comprises a grocery item, and wherein the method further comprises the step of:

Attorney Docket # 3415-11CIP

Serial No. 09/688,482
Amdt. dated February 3, 2004
Reply to Office Action dated October 3, 2003

maintaining the grocery item at a desired temperature by placing a frozen insert in the tote in proximity to the grocery item.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the item comprises a grocery item, and wherein the method further comprises the step of:

maintaining the grocery item at a desired temperature by feeding a chilled gas into at least a portion of the tote.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the item comprises a plurality of items, and wherein:

the step of placing the item in the tote comprises the step of:

placing the plurality of items in a plurality of totes, wherein each of said plural totes comprises a cover, a main structure, and a pair of eyelets on an exterior of the tote, including a first eyelet on an exterior of the cover and a second eyelet on the exterior of the main structure substantially in proximity to the first eyelet; and

the step of securing the tote substantially at the delivery destination comprises the step of:

looping the securing means through the pair of eyelets of each tote to tighten the cover of each tote to the main structure of each tote.

10. (Withdrawn) A system for securely delivering to a delivery destination a tote for holding an item, comprising:

a tote comprising a cover, a main structure, and a pair of eyelets on an exterior of the tote, including a first of the pair of eyelets on the exterior of the cover and a second of the pair of eyelets on the exterior of the main structure substantially in proximity to the first eyelet; and

Attorney Docket # 3415-11CIP

Serial No. 09/688,482
Amdt. dated February 3, 2004
Reply to Office Action dated October 3, 2003

a securing means for securing the tote substantially at the delivery destination by looping a portion of the securing means through the pair of eyelets to securely tighten the cover to the main structure of the tote.

11. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 10, further comprising a storage container mounted in proximity to the delivery destination for holding the securing means when the securing means is not used to secure the tote, and wherein the securing means comprises means for securing the tote to the storage container.

12. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 10, wherein the storage container comprises a box.

13. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 10, wherein the securing means comprises one of a chain and cable.

14. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 10, wherein the securing means comprises a plurality of sections, a first end of a first section of the plurality of sections being securable to the mounting means, and a first end of a second section of the plurality of sections being loopable through and around the first and second eyelets to securely tighten the cover to the main structure of the tote, and further comprising:

a second mounting means proximate the first mounting means;

means for connecting a third section of the plurality of sections to one of the first mounting means and the second mounting means;

a first lock which may be used by a customer for locking a second end of the third section to a second end of the second section; and

a second lock which may be used by a delivery person for locking the first end of the second section to a second end of the first section, after looping the first end of the second section around the first and second eyelets.

Attorney Docket # 3415-11CIP

Serial No. 09/688,482
Amdt. dated February 3, 2004
Reply to Office Action dated October 3, 2003

B4
15. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 10, further comprising a second pair of eyelets on a second side of the tote, including a third eyelet on the exterior of the cover and a fourth eyelet on the exterior of the main structure substantially in proximity to the third eyelet; and means for looping a second securing means through the third and fourth eyelets to securely tighten the cover to the main structure of the tote on the second side.

16. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 10, further comprising
a hinge on a second side of the tote to connect the cover to the main structure of the tote.

17. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 10, further comprising a second tote comprising a cover, a main structure and a second pair of eyelets, and wherein the securing means further comprises means for securing the cover of the second tote to the main structure by looping the securing means through and around the second pair of eyelets.

18-20. (Cancelled)

Attorney Docket # 3415-11CIP

Serial No. 09/688,482
Amdt. dated February 3, 2004
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Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheets have flowcharts of the method steps in the pending claims, as requested by the Examiner in the October 3, 2003 Office Action.

Attached: Four (4) sheet showing new FIGS. 11, 11A, 11B, 11C, 11D, 11E, and 11F